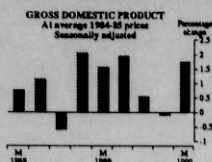


# Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 7 June 1990

## *The week in statistics ...*

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## Economy grows in March quarter

Constant price gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 1.8 per cent in March quarter to be 4.4 per cent higher than in the same quarter last year.

Private final consumption expenditure increased by 0.9 per cent in March quarter to be 2.6 per cent higher than in the same quarter last year. The increase in March quarter was entirely due to strong growth in the non-retail sales components. In particular, expenditure on fares rose by 6.0 per cent from the relatively low level recorded during the height of the pilots' dispute, and the value of purchases of motor vehicles increased by 7.0 per cent over the December quarter.

Private gross fixed capital expenditure declined by 2.4 per cent in March quarter following falls of 3.0 per cent and 3.7 per cent in September and December quarters respectively. Public capital expenditure rose strongly by 11.0 per cent following a 6.7 per cent decline in the previous quarter.

Private non-farm stocks increased by \$477 million in the March quarter while public marketing authority stocks rose strongly by \$581 million.

MAIN NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AGGREGATES, MARCH QUARTER 1990  
Seasonally adjusted estimates at average 1984-85 prices  
Percentage change

	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Final consumption expenditure —		
Private	0.9	2.6
Government	1.5	6.1
Gross fixed capital expenditure	0.7	-2.8
Gross national expenditure	1.5	3.0
Exports of goods and services	5.7	10.3
Imports of goods and services	3.5	2.3
Gross domestic product	1.8	4.4
Gross farm product	-0.9	7.7
Gross non-farm product	1.9	4.3

In current price seasonally adjusted terms, wages, salaries and supplements increased by 2.1 per cent while the gross operating surplus of private corporate trading enterprises rose by 3.9 per cent.

The strong rise in mining industry gross operating surplus (current price seasonally adjusted) is associated with increased production of petroleum and liquefied natural gas and, to a lesser extent, coal (see following article). Exports of these commodities grew significantly in the March quarter, with exports of coal, coke and briquettes increasing by 20.6 per cent in constant price terms and other mineral fuels rising even more rapidly, recording growth of 62.7 per cent.

Exports of goods and services increased by 5.7 per cent while imports increased by 3.5 per cent. Consequently, net exports made a positive contribution of 0.2 per cent to growth in GDP.

*(Unless otherwise indicated these comments are based on seasonally adjusted constant price estimates.) For further information, order the publication Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure (5206.0), or contact Charles Aspden on (06) 252 6711.*

## Miners lead in profits

Seasonally adjusted company profits before income tax grew by 9 per cent to \$4633 million in the March quarter.

This growth followed two consecutive decreases in seasonally adjusted profits for the September and December 1989 quarters of 7 and 6 per cent respectively.

The mining industry played a major part in this growth with an increase in profits of 25 per cent to \$1517 million for the March quarter, with an overall growth in profits before income tax of 89 per cent for the past twelve months.

In the other major industry sectors, manufacturing profits showed no change in the quarter remaining at \$2088 million for an 8 per cent fall over the year, while wholesale and retail industries, despite a 16 per cent jump to \$840 million for the quarter, remained 6 per cent below profit levels of a year earlier.

Profitability in the 'other selected industries' category, which includes industries such as electricity and gas, transport, services to finance investment and insurance, entertainment, restaurants etc. fell by 15 per cent to \$188 million in the March quarter and by 67 per cent over the previous twelve months.

*For further information, order the publication Company Profits, Australia (5651.0), or contact Peter Crouse on (06) 252 5617.*

## Foreign liabilities rise continues

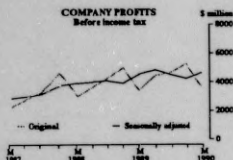
Australia's net international investment position was a negative \$163,453 million at 31 March 1990, or 44.7 per cent of annual gross domestic product (GDP).

This represented an increase in liabilities of \$4,509 million or 2.8 per cent on the position at 31 December 1989 (44.5% of GDP) and an increase in liabilities of \$24,319 million or 17.5 per cent on the position at 31 March 1989 (42.7% of GDP).

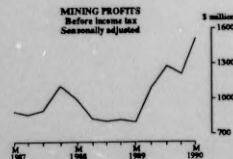
The level of net foreign debt was \$123,570 million at the end of March 1990, up \$6,221 million or 5.3 per cent on the level at the end of December 1989. Net foreign debt accounts for over three quarters of the level of net foreign liabilities.

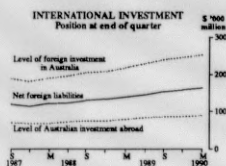
*Continued ...*

**COMPANY PROFITS**  
Before income tax



**MINING PROFITS**  
Before income tax  
Seasonally adjusted





The ratio of net foreign debt to GDP for the year ended 31 March 1990 was 33.8 per cent. This was an increase from 32.8 per cent at 31 December 1989, and 32.9 per cent at 31 March 1989. However, it was below the 34.3 per cent recorded for the year ended 30 September 1986.

The ratio of net investment income payable to exports of goods and services was 24.2 per cent for the year ended 31 March 1990, an increase of 0.9 percentage points from the previous quarter and 3.6 percentage points from the March quarter 1989.

**AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT POSITION**  
(\$A thousand million)

	Level at end of	
	December 1989	March 1990
Foreign investment in Australia		
Borrowing from abroad	147.9	156.3
Other investment	97.6	96.6
Total	245.5	252.9
Australian investment abroad	86.5	89.5
Net international investment position		
Net foreign debt	117.3	123.6
Net other liabilities	41.6	39.9
Total	158.9	163.5

For further information, order the publication *Foreign Investment, Australia*, Preliminary (5307.0), or contact Alison Walker on (06) 252 7045.

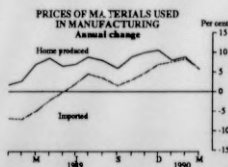
## Steadier prices for materials used in manufacturing

Prices of materials used in manufacturing industries increased by 0.6 per cent in March 1990, following rises of 0.8 per cent and 1.3 per cent in January and February.

The monthly increase was largely a result of higher prices for sheep and lambs, and silver and lead concentrates. These increases were partly offset by lower prices for crude petroleum. The annual increase in the index was 5.7 per cent in March, well down on the annual increase of 8.6 per cent recorded in February.

**PRICES OF MATERIALS USED IN MANUFACTURING, MARCH 1990**  
Percentage change

Source of material	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Imported	0.1	5.8
Home produced	0.8	5.7
Total	0.6	5.7

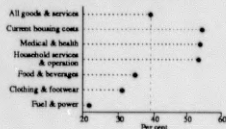


## Household spending patterns described

In 1988-89, Australian households spent an average of \$502.71 per week on goods and services. The largest expenditure categories were food (\$95.83), transport (\$76.13), current housing costs (\$71.80) and recreation (\$59.37).

The overall increase in average household expenditure from 1984 to 1988-89 was 38.9 per cent. The largest percentage increases were for current housing costs (54.5%), medical care and health expenses (54.1%), and household services and operation (53.6%).

WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE  
Percentage change 1984 to 1988-89



WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE ON GOODS AND SERVICES 1988-89

	Expenditure \$	Percentage of total expenditure
Current housing costs (includes rent, rates, repairs, insurance and interest payments)	71.80	14.3
Fuel and power	12.87	2.6
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	95.83	19.1
Alcoholic beverages	16.90	3.4
Tobacco	6.89	1.4
Clothing and footwear	30.73	6.1
Household furnishings and equipment	37.37	7.4
Household services and operation	24.11	4.8
Medical care and health expenses	21.68	4.3
Transport	76.13	15.1
Recreation	59.37	11.8
Personal care	9.95	2.0
Miscellaneous commodities and services	39.08	7.8
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>502.71</b>	<b>100.0</b>

An interesting observation is that low income households differed from households with high income not only in the *level* of their weekly expenditure but also in the *proportion* of this expenditure on different goods and services.

Generally speaking, the proportion of total expenditure on food and non-alcoholic beverages, current housing costs, and fuel and power declined as gross income rose. In 1988-89, households in the bottom ten per cent income group allocated 22.2 per cent of their total expenditure to food and non-alcoholic beverages compared with 17.1 per cent for households in the top ten per cent. Households in the lowest income group allocated 16.6 per cent of their expenditure to current housing costs and 3.8 per cent to fuel and power compared with 11.2 per cent and 2.0 per cent respectively for households in the highest income group.

Conversely, households in the lowest income group allocated a smaller proportion of their total expenditure to recreation, transport, and clothing and footwear than did households in the highest group.

For further information, order the publication 1988-89 Household Expenditure Survey, Australia, Summary of Results (6530.0), or contact Allan Etheredge on (06) 252 7031.

## Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

### ABS Central Office

☐ PO BOX 10  
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### ABS State Offices

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Vic. (03) 615 7000  
Qld (07) 222 6351  
WA (09) 323 5140  
SA (08) 237 7100  
Tas. (002) 20 5800  
NT (089) 81 3456

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

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*Statistics Weekly*  
(06) 252 6101

## All the week's releases: 30 May to 5 June

### General

Statistics Weekly, 31 May 1990 (1318.0; \$3.50)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, NSW, May 1990 (1305.1; \$12.50)  
Economic Indicators, NSW, May 1990 (1307.1; \$3.30)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, Qld, May 1990 (1304.3; \$8.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, WA, May 1990 (1305.5; \$8.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, SA, May 1990 (1303.4; \$8.00)  
Tasmanian Statistical Indicators, May 1990 (1303.6; \$8.00)

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure, March Qtr 1990 (5206.0; \$16.50)  
Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 1989 (5216.0; \$40.00)  
Australian National Accounts: Quarterly Data on Floppy Disk, March Qtr 1990 (5228.0; \$75.00)  
Foreign Investment, Aust., March Qtr 1990, Preliminary (5307.0; \$6.50)  
Exports, Aust., Monthly Summary Tables, March 1990 (5432.0; \$8.00)  
Cash Management Trusts, Aust., April 1990 (5635.0; \$3.30)  
Commercial Finance, Aust., January 1990 (5643.0; \$5.00)  
Lease Finance, Aust., March 1990 (5644.0; \$5.00)  
Company Profits, Aust., March Qtr 1990 (5651.0; \$5.00)

### Labour statistics and prices

Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Aust., March 1990 (6411.0; \$8.50)  
1988-89 Household Expenditure Survey, Aust.: Summary of Results (6530.0; \$8.00)  
Labour Force, SA, February Qtr 1990 (6201.4; \$13.00)

### Agriculture

Principal Agricultural Commodities, Aust., 1989-90, Preliminary (7111.0; \$5.00)  
Livestock Slaughtered and Meat Production in Statistical Divisions, NSW, 1988-89 (7203.1; \$3.50)

### Secondary industry and distribution

Production of Household Appliances and Electrical Equipment, Aust., February 1990 (8357.0; \$5.50)  
Production of Clothing and Footwear, Aust., February 1990 (8358.0; \$8.50)  
Production of Food, Drink, Tobacco and Stock and Poultry Food, Aust., February 1990 (8359.0; \$8.50)  
Production of Fibres, Yarns, Fabrics, Bedding and Floor Coverings, Aust., February 1990 (8360.0; \$8.50)  
Production of Building Materials and Fittings, Aust., February 1990 (8361.0; \$5.50)  
Production of Metal Products, Aust., February 1990 (8367.0; \$4.50)  
Production of Energy Products, Aust., March 1990 (8368.0; \$3.50)  
Building Approvals, NSW, April 1990 (8731.1; \$8.60)  
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Vic., March 1990 (8741.2; \$8.00)  
Mineral Production, Qld, 1988-89 (8402.3; \$5.00)  
Sand, Gravel and Quarry Production, Qld, December 1989 (8403.3; \$3.00)  
Building Approvals, WA, April 1990 (8731.5; \$8.00)  
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, WA, March 1990 (8741.5; \$8.00)  
Building Approvals, SA, April 1990 (8731.4; \$8.50)  
Tourist Accommodation, NT, December Qtr 1989 Corrigendum (8635.7; free)

### Transport

Motor Vehicle Registrations, Vic., April 1990 (9303.2; \$6.00)

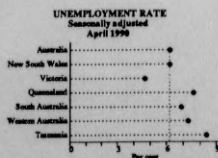
## Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 19 June 1990

- 6** Stocks, Manufacturers' Sales, March Qtr 1990 and Expected Sales to December 1990, Australia (5629.0; \$8.50)  
Quarterly Indexes of Manufacturing Production, Australia, March Qtr 1990 (8219.0; \$7.50)
- 7** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, March 1990 (5609.0; \$8.00)  
The Labour Force, Australia, May 1990, Preliminary (6202.0; \$8.50)
- 12** Balance of Payments, Australia, March Qtr 1990 (5302.0; \$16.50)
- 14** Australian National Accounts: Gross Product, Employment and Hours Worked, March Qtr 1990 (5222.0; \$8.00)  
Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, February 1990 (6302.0; \$8.50)
- 18** Retail Trade, Australia, April 1990 (8501.0; \$8.50)

## The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
5 June 1990



Statistics Weekly  
7 June 1990

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Dec. qtr 89)*	0.6	5.0	27.4	24.3	-6.9	-34.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.4
Retail turnover (Mar. 90) (trend estimate)	8.0	5.7	8.7	5.0	5.6	7.7	n.a.	8.4	6.9
New motor vehicle registrations (Apr. 90)*	-2.1	56.7	3.8	29.6	-1.4	n.a.	-4.0	16.7	15.5
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Apr. 90)	-25.4	-38.7	-28.3	-11.5	-55.8	-18.4	7.6	-10.6	-32.5
Value of total building work done (Dec. qtr)	20.3	13.7	15.6	23.4	24.1	9.1	15.9	5.6	17.6
Employed persons (April 90)*	1.6	3.6	4.9	1.6	1.9	6.5	-11.5	3.9	2.7
Capital city consumer price index (Mar. qtr 90)	9.1	8.7	7.8	6.9	9.1	7.2	6.2	8.3	8.6
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (November 89)	7.9	6.8	3.7	6.9	6.4	4.7	2.6	4.6	6.6
Population (Sept. 89)	0.9	1.2	3.2	1.0	2.9	0.8	0.0	1.7	1.6
Guest nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (Sept. qtr 89)	-8.5	19.0	-24.5	13.8	4.5	-6.6	2.1	-6.7	-7.9

\* Seasonally adjusted for States (but not Territories)



## Key national indicators – consolidated to 5 June 1990

			Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on		
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
Period							
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 90	89,263	94,113	2.3	9.8
	— 1984-85 prices			62,050	65,441	1.8	4.4
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 90	6,163	6,947	-2.9	-3.0
	— 1984-85 prices			4,631	5,209	-4.3	-8.7
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Three months to June 90	8,170	n.a.	n.a.	-2.7
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Mar. 90	6,914	6,992	0.0	6.1
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Mar. qtr 90	14,013	14,836	0.0	1.4
New motor vehicle registrations		no.	Apr. 90	47,254	53,940	-6.3	15.5
Dwelling unit approvals		"	"	9,993	11,231	-5.9	-27.4
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,853	1,988	0.6	-19.6
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	Dec. qtr 89	8,109	7,741	-0.4	17.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	5,248	5,010	-2.3	6.5
Manufacturers' sales (e)		"	Dec. qtr 89	37,329	35,539	3.1	9.9
Expected manufacturers' sales (e)		"	Six months to June 90	71,716	n.a.	n.a.	9.7
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons (f)		'000	Apr. 90	7,894.3	7,861.0	0.6	2.7
Unemployment rate † (f)		%	"	6.3	6.2	0.1	0.1
Participation rate † (f)		"	"	63.8	63.4	0.3	0.6
Job vacancies		'000	Feb. 90	60.9	56.1	-15.0	-15.9
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.4	1.4	-8.7	-3.5
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		Mar. qtr 90	204.1		1.7	8.6
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0		Mar. 90	121.5	n.a.	0.6	5.7
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1968-69 = 100.0		Mar. 90	567.8	n.a.	0.9	6.6
Company profits before income tax		\$m	Mar. qtr 90	3,668	4,633	9.0	2.0
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	Feb. 90	524.80	n.a.	1.6	6.6
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		Apr. 90	15.05	n.a.	-0.4	-2.2
10-year Treasury bonds †			"	13.80	n.a.	0.4	0.4
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	Apr. 90	4,181	4,115	6.2	2.6
Imports of merchandise		"	"	3,777	4,047	-8.7	-6.4
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	404	68	n.a.	n.a.
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	89	-279	70.5	54.9
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	-1,018	-1,417	35.2	15.2
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0		Mar. qtr 90	n.a.	103.9	-5.0	-6.1
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt		\$m	31 Mar. 90	123,570	n.a.	5.3	15.3
Net foreign liabilities		"	"	163,453	n.a.	2.8	17.5
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
\$US	per \$A		Apr. 90	0.7641	n.a.	1.1	-5.0
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.6	n.a.	1.8	-0.5
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million		Sept. 89	16.9	n.a.	0.3	1.5
Overseas visitors	'000		Feb. 90	193	176	-4.3	0.3

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures released Wednesday, 6 June 1990. (f) Later figures released Thursday, 7 June 1990.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).

Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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